

ALASKA PEOPLE

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From Paper & Pencils to PCs

by Ella Wright

Wayne Boden, DSD for the Division of Conveyance Management, holds a pencil. It's a dinosaur! Especially when he compares the paper and pencil-pushing method of doing land conveyance reports to using modern technology to accomplish the same task.

Pam Chesla and Terry Brokovich spent Thanksgiving Day 1991 installing 50 new workstations and six printers in the Conveyance Division. On Monday an additional 20 workstations were delivered, and by Wednesday all 70 PCs and software identified in Phase I of the new automation plan for Conveyances were installed and tested.

"It was a challenge meeting GANDALF's deadlines to get the PCs installed," said Brokovich.

GANDALF is the Vancouver, B.C. contractor hired by BLM to install fiber optic communication lines to connect the Conveyance Division's local area network, or LAN, and 138 lines for workstations and printers. The fiber optic lines, made from flexible strands of glass which form cables, are housed in three central rooms on the fourth floor.

The network is served by two file servers allowing access to various "Host" computers, such as the PRIME computer.

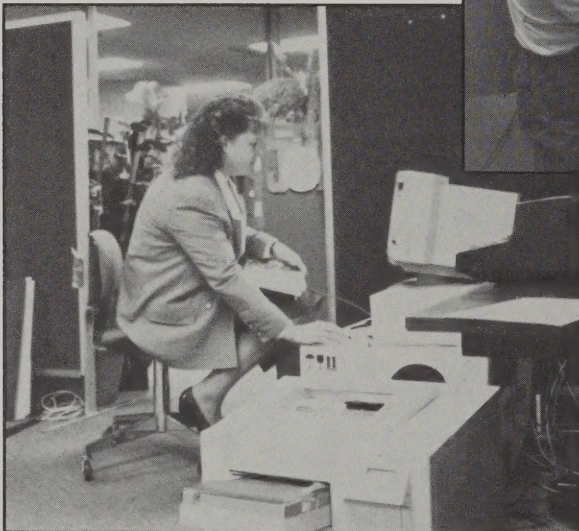
Eventually Conveyances will have about 130 terminals connected to the LAN. Users will have statewide, in-house, and even Denver Service Center access.

The new automated network offers 960 users access to EXCEL spreadsheets, WordPerfect 5.1 word processing, electronic mail, ALMRS and Interim LIS data capabilities.

Boden expects to have his people trained on the microcomputers and component software during this fiscal year.

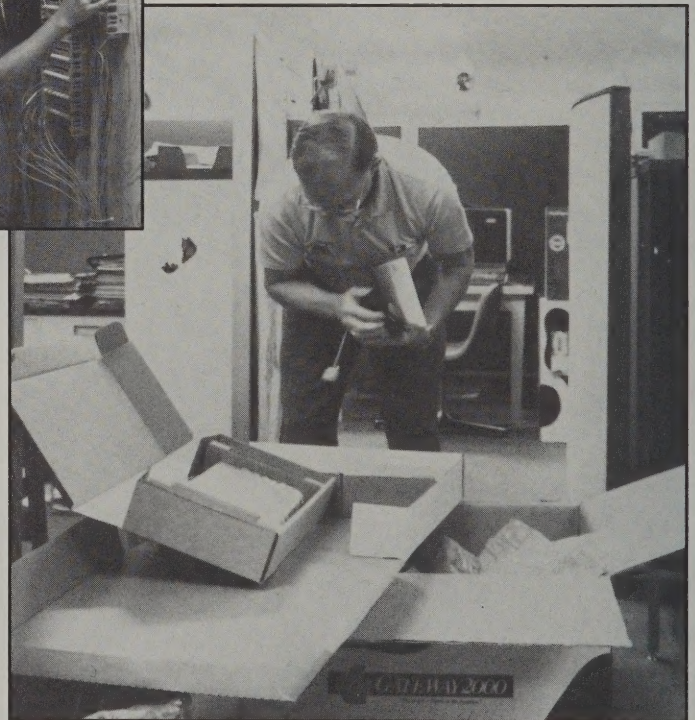
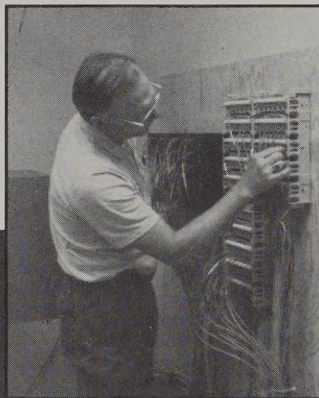
"With the same number of people we already have, we should be able to improve our productivity by 20 percent," said Boden.

"We'll need about two years transition time while people learn to use the new hardware and software, but we're shooting for an increase in productivity by the end of FY 92."



Center: Terry Brokovich of Information Resources Management inspects fiber optic communication lines for the Conveyance Division's new computer network.

Above: Computer analyst Pam Chesla tests the newly installed equipment.



Brokovich and Chesla unpacked and installed 50 new computer workstations over the Thanksgiving holiday. (Photos by Teresa McPherson)

Rhodes Proves Volunteerism is Alive and Well Among BLM's Busy Retirees

by Teresa McPherson

Doris Rhodes adjusted her glasses and peered at the slide. It was a very old shot of a Tlingit family standing next to their home somewhere along the southeast coast of Alaska. Rhodes smiled as she assigned a catalog number to the slide. Unlike some of the slides donated to the museum, this one was a keeper, and would make a nice addition to the library's archives.

Doris Rhodes retired from BLM in 1979. But her love of Alaskan culture and her amiable nature just wouldn't allow her to sit back and take it easy. So Rhodes went to the Anchorage Museum of History and Art and enlisted as a volunteer.

"I've always loved the museum," she said. "So I thought, Why not volunteer? It's a great way to meet interesting people, and share what I know about Alaska with others. And it keeps me out of mischief!"

Rhodes has been a volunteer at the museum for 11 years. She works in the museum's archive library, cataloging slides and photographs of current and past exhibits. The library also maintains an extensive archive of historic and cultural photos and slides which are used by authors, researchers and publishers.

But Rhodes says her favorite duty at the museum is conducting tours for groups that visit during the busy summer months.

"Many tourists have such outlandish ideas of what Alaska is like," said Rhodes. "I love to help acquaint them with the real Alaska. My favorite part of the museum is the Native historical and cultural exhibits. Most tourists think all Alaska Natives are Eskimo. So I explain the four major groups of Alaska Natives,

and how each is unique in its art and culture."

How did a former BLM transportation specialist come to be something of an expert in Alaska's art and history?

"I've always loved the museum. So I thought, Why not volunteer? It's a great way to meet interesting people, and share what I know about Alaska with others." —Doris Rhodes

"Each January the museum offers a wonderful training program for all volunteers," explained Rhodes. "I always

learn something new that I can share with our visitors."

When Rhodes isn't helping out at the museum, she's active in the Anchorage Log Cabin Quilters Guild. Her quilts were featured in a recent issue of *Lady's Circle* magazine. She also collects antique or Depression fabrics, such as feedsacks, and has donated several items to various museums.

"I always tell people who have possible antiques, or very old photographs or slides, don't throw anything away!" said Rhodes. "Donate it to a museum. It could be the missing piece that would complete an exhibit. History is being made every day, and museums are the depositories for these events."



BLM retiree Doris Rhodes sorts and catalogs slides donated to the Anchorage Museum of History and Art where she volunteers each Wednesday. (Photo by Teresa McPherson)

Tracy Appointed First BLM Ranger/ Pilot

by Sharon Durgan Wilson

Steese/White Mountains Ranger Randy Tracy was recently selected to be the first ranger/pilot in the bureau. "BLM is the only Interior agency in Alaska that doesn't have its own dual-function pilots," says Dean Crabbs, head of BLM Alaska's law enforcement program.

"BLM must manage activities on vast stretches of roadless wilderness in northern Alaska, and it just can't be covered without more flying," said Crabbs.

BLM Alaska law enforcement proposed the pilot program. Receiving headquarters approval, Crabbs helped develop the program with the BLM aviation support group in Boise, Idaho.

"I was notified in early November that I'd been appointed," said Tracy. "I was delighted, to say the least."

Tracy reported to the Boise aviation support staff for pilot recurrency training earlier this month. The program will bring him up-to-date in his pilot certificates. Tracy already holds commercial and instrument ratings, with multi-engine and certified flight instructor certificates.

After he returns to Alaska, Tracy will continue intermittent training with the Office of Aircraft Services at Lake Hood in Anchorage for about a year, until he meets Federal Aviation Association and OAS standards, and receives his OAS card for special use missions.

Tracy's three-week training in Boise will be conducted in a PA-18 (super cub), a Cessna 172, and a Partenavia (a multi-engine aircraft). Training will include mountain flying, instrument cross-country flight, and refresher of FAA regulations.

Tracy started flying in the mid-1970s after his hitch with the U.S. Marine Corps. He particularly enjoyed teaching students to fly, and hopes to pursue this in Alaska in the future.

"Having a ranger who can fly will help our law enforcement and resource protection missions," said District Manager Roger Bolstad. "As managers, we need to be aware of all activities on the public lands BLM manages. Since much of our land is remote and roadless, flying increases the efficiency of our resource protection officer."

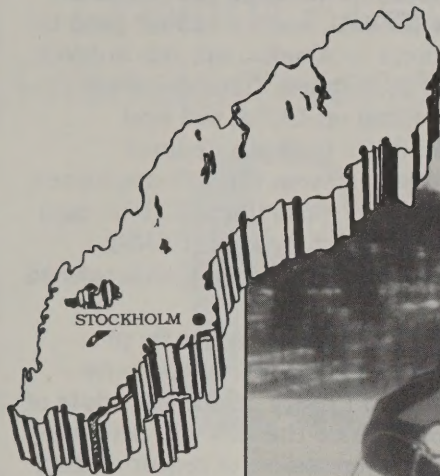


BLM Ranger Randy Tracy answers questions for a visitor to the White Mountains National Recreation Area. Tracy was recently selected to be the first BLM ranger/pilot in the bureau. (Photo by Dan Gullickson)

"And the best way financially to improve effectiveness is to have our own pilot."

Crabbs emphasized that BLM pilots would only augment air taxi operators for some law enforcement flights, not replace them. "It just gives us the capability for more flying," Crabbs added.

Alaskans and Swedes Have Much in Common



Skijouring? Well, not exactly... Reindeer racing is a popular winter activity enjoyed by many Swedes. (Photo by Dr. Terry McFadden)

by Elinor Fransson

Last July, in preparation for my upcoming vacation to Sweden, I telephoned the Swedish consulate. It was July, I was told by the consulate, so they couldn't reach anyone in Sweden. I'd have to get back with them in August. The reason? The entire country virtually shuts down for six weeks in the summer as Swedes take to their summer houses in the woods, on the Baltic shores, on the lakes and in the mountains. I'd prefer this custom to our daylight savings time!

The consulate did come through in August and I received a list of contacts. I thought it might be interesting to talk to a few Swedish resource professionals and public officials to get a feel for Sweden's public lands policies and how they contrast with our own here in Alaska. I also spoke with a number of Swedish

citizens, and found that we Alaskans have a lot in common with our Scandinavian counterparts.

Sweden has national parks and campgrounds for public use, just as we do, but they also have a provision called *Allemansrätt*, commonly known as "everyman's right." This allows people to use the vast forests and farmlands provided they observe the "do not disturb, do not destroy" philosophy. You can even camp for one or two nights on private property without permission.

I found it interesting that Swedish customs and habits seem calculated to make living on the northern rim pleasant. As in Alaska, winter sports are popular, and many break the mid-winter doldrums by escaping to the Canary Islands or Greece as we might to Hawaii. But in a

country where gasoline is \$6 a gallon, many can't afford to do this. So like most Alaskans, Swedes are adaptable. As Anders Karlqvist of Sweden's Polar Research Secretariat put it, "You don't move up north and be sad because you can't grow bananas!"

Lena Edenbrank, a resident of Gällivåre in northern Sweden, told me: "People ask 'how can you live up here?' In the cold you learn to take the right clothes—wool, felt. It's another kind of living. People here like to fish, to hunt, to walk in the forest. They like to pick berries."

As I listened to this friendly Swedish woman, I smiled as I realized that despite the thousands of miles between us, Alaskans and Swedes aren't so very different after all.

Workwise or Otherwise



As Vice President of the Anchorage Federal Executive Association, BLM State Director Ed Spang presented United Way awards on December 11 to all southcentral Alaska **Combined Federal Campaign** participants

who met or exceeded their goal in the recent campaign. CFC coordinator Sue Faught of Minerals Division accepted the United Way award on behalf of BLM.

"BLMers pledged a total of \$45,061 this year," said Faught. "This exceeded our goal by 28 percent. That's something we can all be proud of."

The award is on display on the fourth floor of the Anchorage Federal Office Building. (Photo by Ed Bovy)

A recent court decision declared that **cost-of-living allowances** (COLA), such as those paid to many Federal workers in Alaska, are not subject to social security (FICA) taxes. This decision means that withholding on COLA will end effective pay period 9201 for both Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employees, who pay approximately 7.65% toward FICA, and for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees, who pay approximately 1.45% toward Medicare.

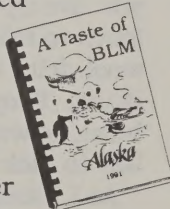
The Division of PAY/PERS is currently processing the paperwork necessary to compute refunds retroactive to January 1988. The date of payment is unknown since the IRS will process the claims following submission of required data from PAY/PERS.

The generous BLM employees of the Anchorage Campbell Tract donated almost 20 boxes of food and gifts to the **Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family Program**. A very successful turkey raffle allowed them to buy 13 more turkeys, for a total donation of 17 turkeys, several hams and a large number of canned goods. Campbell Tract BLMers also collected four boxes of clothing that were taken to the Brother Francis Shelter, and four boxes of clothing and toys for the Anchorage Women's Aid in Crisis shelter.

The ASO Activities Committee

once again conducted several charity fundraising activities in December. Toys, food and clothing were collected for needy BLM families, the Neighbor to Neighbor program, and the Catholic Social Services. Thanks to employee generosity and support, this was a very successful year. Proceeds from the BLM Employee Cookbook will also be donated to charity. To date \$300 has been contributed to Bean's Cafe, \$200 to the Neighbor to Neighbor program, and \$250 to the Brother Francis shelter. Donations will continue until cookbook proceeds are liquidated.

The Activities Committee thanks everyone for their donations and wishes everyone a safe and happy new year!



On December 20 land law examiner Rosaline Holland (third from left) of Calista Branch of Adjudication gave her co-workers a special gift for the holidays—a musical visit from the **Sweet Adelines Anchorage Sourdough Chorus**.

Holland, who sings lead for the barbershop style chorus, has performed with the group at the Alaska State Fair and the Anchorage Center for the Performing Arts, and will sing at the upcoming Fur Rendezvous.

"We're all business women," said Holland. "Most of the group are school teachers. So sometimes it's hectic finding the time, but it's also a lot of fun."

Living the Dream – Let Freedom Ring



by Cliff Ligons

January 13-20, 1992, has been designated "King Week '92" with the theme "Living the Dream-Let Freedom Ring." This marks the seventh observance of the federal holiday in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

President Bush has pledged his support of Dr. King's legacy, saying: "We must continue working to promote racial unity and equal opportunity in the United States."

BLM is committed to public policies and programs that reflect Dr. King's vision. Our continued outreach and recruitment activities designed to expand employment opportunities for minorities and women in the

federal work force reflect BLM's commitment to making Dr. King's dream a reality.

This year in conjunction with the King holiday, BLM once again participated in the Black Managers Forum. This half-day training program featured lively discussion, pre-taped role plays, and interaction with forum speakers via an 800 number. The forum examined the impacts of demographic and cultural changes in the work place, and how managers and employees can adapt and benefit from this diversity.

A pplause

Supervisors can help to expedite award processing by checking award packets for accuracy, appropriateness of award, and proper forms. If you have questions, call Nancy Brainerd at 271-3187.

Sustained Superior Performance Award

Jenice Prutz, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management
Lisa Burges, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management
J. Rena Christoffersen, Cartographic
Technician, Division of Cadastral
Survey
Carrie Hicks, Cartographic Technician,
Division of Support Services
Mike Cincar, Cartographic Technician,
Division of Support Services
Vicki Wolfson, Cartographic Technician,
Division of Support Services
Lloyd Miller, Supervisory Land Law
Examiner, Division of Cadastral Survey
Sandra Smith, Supply Technician,
Division of Support Services
Charlene Montague, Motor Vehicle
Operator, Division of Support Services
Aaron Maltba, Procurement Assistant,
Division of Support Services
Rosanna Benbow, Contract Specialist,
Division of Support Services
Suvina Holmes, Miscellaneous
Documents Examiner, Division of
Support Services

Beth Penwell, Miscellaneous Documents
Examiner, Division of Support Services
Diana Songer, Miscellaneous Documents
Examiner, Division of Support Services
Helen Brooks, Miscellaneous Documents
Examiner, Division of Support Services

Quality Increase Award

Heather Coats, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management
Paul Moss, Land Surveyor, Division of
Cadastral Survey
Angela Nichols, Secretary, Division of
Cadastral Survey
Cheryl Wells, Administrative Technician,
Glennallen District Office
Jerri Sansone, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management
Lynda Ehrhart, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management

On-the-Spot Cash Award

James Sisk, Supervisory Natural
Resource Specialist, Arctic District
Office
Jon Kehler, Land Surveyor, Division of
Cadastral Survey
Nelda Garrett, Contact Representative,
Division of Support Services
Helen Gerstemeier, Administrative Clerk,
Division of Support Services

Length of Service

10-Year Service Award
Brenda Coleman, Staffing Assistant,
Division of Support Services

Diane Nelson, Land Surveyor, Division of
Cadastral Survey
Kenneth Butner, Land Law Examiner,
Division of Conveyance Management
Paul Whalin, Cartographic Technician,
Division of Cadastral Survey
Ramouna Sandbo, Computer Operator,
Alaska Fire Service

20-Year Service Award

Jeanette Ristow, Supervisory
Miscellaneous Documents Examiner,
Division of Support Services

Welcome Aboard (January 1992)

Michael N. Carlton, Maintenance
Mechanic, Division of Support Services
Frederick W. Dillingham, Student
Trainee (Archaeologist), Arctic District
Office
Bertha W. King, Staffing Assistant,
Division of Support Services

Moving On (January 1992)

Lynne M. Monroe, Student Trainee
(General Administration), Division of
Support Services
Inez B. Neeley, Staffing Assistant, Division
of Support Services
Sarah M. Watson, Wildlife Biologist,
Steese/White Mountains District Office

*This information provided by ASO Branch
of Human Resources.*



BLM employees Larry Kajdan and John Rego and volunteer Jeff Szarsl lend a hand to raise the roof on a new temporary structure at the Glennallen District Office.

District employees Bill Thomas, Janelle Eklund, Ed Barr, Mike McGinty, David Mushovic and Mark Phillips also assisted BLM maintenance mechanic Kurt Sorenson by driving nails, steadying a ladder, lifting a wall, or offering advice as the structure was being framed and roofed. All Glennallen employees took interest in the construction progress, which was visible from the front office.

"It gave the district employees a real sense of camaraderie," said District Manager Gene Keith.

The structure should be completed by spring 1992. (Photo by David Mushovic)

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On the Cover:

BLM retiree Doris Rhodes, a long-time volunteer at the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, conducts a tour of Alaska Native cultural exhibits for visitors to the museum. Rhodes also maintains the museum's slide archives, but says her first love is doing tours.

"Many tourists have outlandish ideas of what Alaska is like," said Rhodes. "I love to help acquaint them with the real Alaska." See story on page 3.



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